

Island

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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NSC BRIEFING

9 November 1954

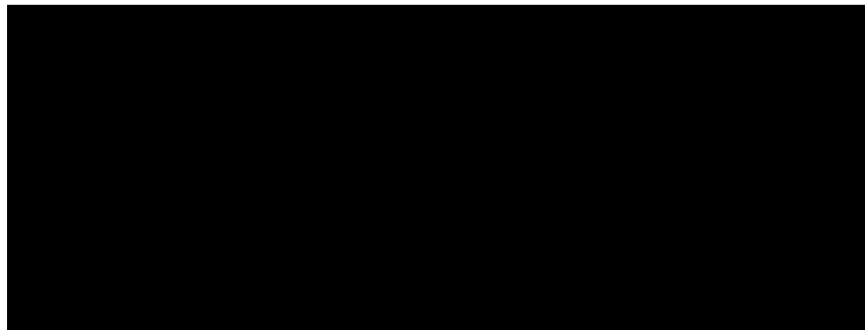
CHINESE OFFSHORE ISLANDS

- I. Bad weather helped keep Tachens situation fairly quiet past week.
 - A. Typhoons no longer factor, however.
- II. In past week Communist planes bombed Ichiang, 8 miles NW Tachens; reportedly hit Yushans, 30 miles NE Tachens.
 - A. Nationalist planes 2-4 November bombed Communist positions on Toumen, north of Ichiang, but artillery there continues hit Ichiang.
 - B. This first report Communist pressure on Yushan.
- III. Sightings of Communist gunboats and patrol vessels in Tachens area doubled since 1 November.
 - confirmed
 - A. No/reports naval clashes past

- B. Nationalists keeping 7-8 ships
in Tachens area.
- IV. Several possible forms Communist action
against Tachens.
 - A. Could probably make Tachens
untenable by sustained air attacks.
 - B. Could take Ichiang, then harass
Upper and Lower Tachens with
artillery.
 - C. Could take lesser islands in Tachen
defense command--Yushan, Pishan,
Nanchi.
 - D. This might panic Nationalists
into withdrawal from main islands
of group.
- V. In Quemoy area, Communist activity
seems largely defensive.
 - A. Artillery duels continue, without
much damage.

- B. Only 50,000 Communist troops
at Amoy now -- would require
150,000 to invade Quemoy.

VI.



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- B. Could indicate Communist plan--
as of 1 November--for early
invasion major islands.
- C. Communists remain capable taking
any or all offshore islands
against Nationalist opposition
alone.

VII. Peiping's plans almost sure to be
affected by indications of US intentions--
both US naval movements and current
news stories from Washington.

- A. These stories say US is negotiating mutual defense pact with Nationalists on understanding Taipei avoid provocative attacks on mainland.
- B. Stories speculate on US policy re offshore islands.

VIII. In first Communist comment on these stories, Peiping repeated standard line that US is pushing ahead talks for "treaty of military aggression."

- A. Peiping's comment did not mention offshore islands.

IX. Difficult judge whether offshore island situation immediately affected by these stories.

- A. Communists might conclude US very reluctant become involved.
- B. They may therefore judge US bluffing in moving strong naval forces

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- C. They cannot be certain, however, US will not intervene.
- D. On balance, seems likely Communists will make further efforts determine whether US bluffing, before attempting invasion of major offshore islands.
- E. While continuing limited military action, possibly including capture some smaller islands, Communists expected wait for further news stories, official US statements, information from diplomatic sources, leaks from Taipei.

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LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, OFFSHORE ISLANDS

On 8 November Peiping Radio referred to the past -- not current -- presence of U. S. naval forces in Tachen island waters and quoted news agencies as reporting that "U. S. naval strength in the Formosa Straits has increased, with American warships patrolling there day and night."

The Nationalist press is reporting that U. S. naval vessels have formed a "protective net" around the Tachen island group.

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